

OUR TOWNS Cedar County

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A Family Af-'Fair'

Hartington Family Takes Part In Yankton Theatre Production

BY EMILY NOHR
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Some people may think driving 50 miles round-trip to participate in a community theater production is too expensive.

A Hartington family — Bob and Audrey Bryan, along with their daughter Jo — consider their adventures rehearsing and performing in "My Fair Lady," directed by Andy Henrickson of Yankton's Lewis and Clark Theatre Company this summer, very worthwhile.

"It's a nice way to get involved with people outside your normal crowd and to have fun," Bob said.

"It's an incredibly nice group of people," his wife, Audrey, added.

When Jo, a recent graduate of Hartington Public School, decided to try out for the musical, she talked her parents into participating, too. Each member of the Bryan family had experience with the arts — just not at the Dakota Theatre, and not necessarily onstage.

While the theater may be a different setting for the Bryans to perform, it is "really not out of the ordinary," Jo said.

This year, Jo won first place in extemporaneous speaking at Nebraska's high school state speech contest. She also took part in one-act and school plays. With no summer job and lots of free time, she thought the show would be fun, Jo said. She plays a member of the cockney and ascot chorus.

Bob, the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Hartington and Crofton, knew he could handle singing and speaking in public. A few years ago, he took part in some productions with the Cedar County Theater Company, like "Murder to Death" and "Harvey." He also participated in musicals when he and his family lived in central Illinois.

But, when he landed the role of Alfred P. Doolittle, a lead in "My Fair Lady," Bob got a little nervous about the amount of dancing that was required of him.

"To sing and dance at the same time? I don't dance and sing the liturgy at the same time in church," Bob said with a laugh.

"In this, there's a lot of spots where Andy (Henrickson) said just dance, do something," he added.

Bob has enjoyed reviving the role of Doolittle, the drunken and conniving father of the main character, Eliza, whose status as an underclass citizen leads her to a professor of dialect who wants to make her into a true lady.

"I'm just trying to get a dollar out of the whole deal," Bob said. "It's a great story," added Audrey, who took a little more convincing to join the show.

A skilled fiddler and organist for church, Audrey's only theater experience was helping behind the scenes. She and Bob had performed in a clogging club many years ago, but she wasn't sure "My Fair Lady" would be for her.

"I almost didn't try out out

because I didn't want to have any lines," she said.

Now, as Audrey plays a member of the cockney and ascot chorus, she encourages anyone thinking about performing in theater to do so.

"If they only knew how much fun it is," Audrey said with a smile.

"It's very much live. You're putting on a show — it's hits, misses, errors, everything," Bob added.

The Bryans, who also have two older daughters, came to northeast Nebraska from Illinois six years ago. While their church family and community have been nice additions to their Nebraska experience, the Bryans have enjoyed extending their friend base to Yankton.

"I love meeting the people, and being from Hartington, it's nice to see another set (of people) other than the ones you (already) have," Jo said.

"One of the neat things for us is that it lets you be part of a team," Bob added. "We're not in sports, so this is fun being in a team production."

But the Bryans aren't the first family from Hartington to be part of the Dakota Theatre "team." The Kip and Chris Lammers family, also of Hartington, took part in the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company productions for years.

Hartington natives Melody Wieseler and Megan Kneiff are also part of "My Fair Lady." The Bryans and Kneiff have car-pooled to rehearsals all summer.

"Megan might as well be part of the family," Jo said.



COURTESY PHOTOS
Bob and Audrey Bryan (above), as well as their daughter Jo (left), are making the trek from Hartington to Yankton to perform in the Lewis and Clark Theatre Company's production of "My Fair Lady." The production runs the next two weekends at the Dakota Theatre in downtown Yankton.

SCHOOL

From Page 1

level-three alert status even though the middle school successfully met every subcategory this year. A school must meet AYP two consecutive years to be removed from alert status.

"What this is saying is that, even though the middle school met all of their requirements this year, they were still moved to level three because they did not make it last year," Gertsema said. "Once a school is at level two, the way the system is set up, they will automatically move to level three the following year, no matter what their test results."

If the middle school has similar results next year, it will be removed from school alert status. Webster Elementary, which was the only school to fail to

meet 100 percent of the AYP standards this year, has been placed on a level one alert status for math.

"Just one subset was not met — economically disadvantaged in math," Wentworth said. "Beyond that, every other subset district-wide was met in the testing."

Gertsema added: "The irony of this is, we think — and we are still doing some research in this — this is the result of a few fifth grade test scores. Those students are moving on to the middle school next year. So the entire school will now be on school improvement for the next two years, for a few students that will not even be in the school anymore."

"The consequence of being in school improvement is we will go back to a data retreat — where the teachers and administrators literally go through scores student by student," Wentworth said. "We do the data retreat in

September and we are hoping we see similar result to last year where schools move off of alert status."

Wentworth added that even the schools that met all standards would participate in the data retreat.

"When you take a look at what you teach, when you are teaching it and how you teach, it makes all the difference for our students," she said. "You always want to be ahead of the state."

That level of dedication is serving the students well. "Overall, the Yankton School District students have performed very, very well in the testing program," Wentworth said. "The district scores are wonderful. They are some of the best scores we have ever seen."

To see all results from the test, go to <https://nclb.ddncampus.net/nclb/portal/portal.xsl?&extractID=12>.

Geithner Pledges Quick Action On New Law

BY EMILY FREDRIX AND MARTIN CRUTSINGER
AP Business Writers

NEW YORK — Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner pledged on Monday to move with speed to implement the biggest overhaul of the financial system since the Great Depression. He said that a top priority will be simplifying the complicated forms that consumers have to fill out to get credit cards, auto loans and mortgages.

"We will move as quickly as possible to bring clarity to the new rules of finance," Geithner said in a speech to Wall Street executives and students at New York University's Stern School of Business. "The rule writing process traditionally has moved at a frustrating, glacial pace. We must change that."

Geithner said that officials from all the government agencies involved in financial reform including Treasury, the Federal Reserve, the Securities and Exchange Commission and various banking regulators, will set target deadlines for writing the new rules, issue on Aug. 17.

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